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ABSTRACT

The College Level Teaching Core offered at Valencia Community College (Florida) has been developed as a planned orientation and training program for college faculty. Offered twice per academic year during the early part of both the fall and spring semesters, the majority of College Level Teaching Core participants are members of the college's adjunct faculty. The program includes four workshops: (1) Educational Policies and Issues, which provides a broad cultural and operational overview of the college; (2) Learning Theory, which reviews key concepts and research perspectives on student motivation and classroom effectiveness; (3) Testing and Instruction (Teacher Effectiveness), which provides a more direct approach to instructional planning, implementation, application and evaluation; and (4) Educational Technologies, which gives an extensive hands-on overview of learning resources support services and facilities. The content of each segment incorporates participant needs and interests derived from pre-workshop surveys. Combining key information, active learning techniques, and hands on demonstration, the College Level Teaching Core aims to enhance professional identity, improve communication, strengthen the faculty labor pool, and improve the overall quality of the educational program. The program has been in operation for approximately four years. Feedback is provided by a standard evaluation instrument employed to monitor the effectiveness of workshop design and presentation, and responses have improved consistently over this time frame with most scaled responses in the 5-4 range, with 5 signifying the most positive and 1 signifying the most negative evaluation. (AS)

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A Presentation for
The 8th Annual International Conference for
Chairs, Deans, and Other Organizational Leaders

March 3-6, 1999
Long Beach, California

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The College Level Teaching:
An Orientation and Training System for New Faculty

Biographical Sketches of the Presenters

Dr. Jared S. Graber is the Chairman of the Department of Social Sciences at Valencia Community College's West Campus. This department offers course work in all traditional behavioral and social science disciplines as well as education. Dr. Graber has been affiliated with the Florida community college system for twenty-four years, serving as both a faculty member and administrator. Between 1988 and 1994 he held the position of Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences at Lake-Sumter Community College. As a faculty member in political science Dr. Graber's teaching repertoire includes courses in American Government, State and Local Government, and International Relations. He also serves as an adjunct member of the graduate faculty at the University of Central Florida where he teaches a seminar on the History and Philosophy of American Higher Education. Dr. Graber holds a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in political science, a master's degree in public administration and a doctorate in educational leadership.

His professional activities have included selection for the American Association of Community College's Professional Administrator's Development Institute, a National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship in Middle Eastern Political Systems at the University of Texas, Austin, and selection for the Florida Endowment for the Humanities Florida Challenge Program. He is also a graduate of the Leadership Orlando program. Dr. Graber is involved with regional accreditation activities as a member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Visiting Committee System.

Dr. Paul A. Kinser joined the faculty of Valencia Community College in 1972 as a Professor of Economics. He served as a faculty member, teaching on all Valencia campuses, for five years. In 1977 he accepted the position of Director of Continuing Education with responsibility for all off campus college credit classes in Orange and Osceola counties, including courses offered via television. Since that time he has served as Dean of Continuing Education, Dean of the Osceola Campus and Instructional Telecommunications and Provost of the West Campus. He holds a master's degree in economics and a doctorate in curriculum and instruction.

Dr. Kinser has college wide responsibilities for several programs including The College Level Teaching Core, an initiative designed to orient and train new faculty, and the Faculty Academy, a longer range program which prepares and evaluates tenure track faculty for continuing contract eligibility. Dr. Kinser has served as a member of the Kissimmee and Osceola County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and was Vice Chairman for the Quality First Initiative. He has served as President of the Council on Aging for Osceola County and as Chairman of the Board for Humana Hospital,

Kissimmee. He is a graduate of the Leadership Orlando program.

The College Level Teaching Core: An Orientation and Training System for New Faculty

Valencia Community College, a comprehensive multi campus community college is a creative leader and partner in the Central Florida community. The College is dedicated to the premise that quality educational opportunity is necessary to bring together the diverse social, ethnic, political and economic forces in a democratic and open society. The College also recognizes that each student is different, and, therefore, should have available a variety of services that support student academic and personal development. Valencia's dedicated faculty and staff offer courses, workshops and seminars at multiple campuses and centers utilizing traditional curricula as well as emerging instructional technologies. Planning and evaluations are ongoing processes to ensure institutional effectiveness.

The College Level Teaching Core has been developed as a planned orientation and training program for a college faculty. Participation is required for tenure track faculty members as a part of the college's Faculty Academy program. However, the majority of College Level Teaching Core participants are members of the college's extensive adjunct faculty. Each adjunct faculty member who completes all components of the program is rewarded with a financial stipend of $150. Individual presentations employ contemporary research, case studies and professional interaction to develop meaningful perspectives on instructional roles and institutional support systems.

The program includes four workshops: (I) Educational Policies and Issues, (II) Learning Theory, (III) Testing and Instruction (Teacher Effectiveness) and (IV) Educational Technologies. The content of each segment incorporates participant needs and interests derived from pre workshop surveys. The College Level Teaching Core program is offered twice per academic year during the early part of both the fall and spring semesters. Independent sessions of each core workshop are scheduled on both of the college's two largest campuses. Between 25-30 participants register for each session.

Combining key information, active learning technique and hands on demonstration the College Level Teaching Core enhances professional identity, improves communication, strengthens the faculty labor pool and improves the overall quality of the educational program. This multifaceted program establishes a critical substructure and training opportunity for new faculty members. Improved awareness and early reflection have helped many individuals avoid common pitfalls and prevent problems generated by limited experience with the classroom environment.

A unique feature of the system is the use of a rather extensive preliminary survey

instrument which collects information on the needs and interests of registered participants and employs this information too more effectively plan and present each of the four program segments. For each workshop a substantive list of "areas of focus" has been developed. Several weeks prior to the workshop faculty members are asked to review these lists and indicate for each area whether they have high interest, moderate interest or low interest. Low interest responses can be based on either personal preferences or previous experience and expertise. In addition to frequency responses individual comments are solicited and an open area is provided for "other" areas of interest.

The initial workshop on Educational Policies and Issues provides a broad cultural and operational overview of the college. This workshop is presented and facilitated by experienced college administrators. For this segment the pre workshop survey examines participant interest related to college programs and services, regional and professional accreditation, Florida's public educational system, the curriculum development and review process, general education requirements, economic development initiatives, funding and financial issues, scheduling of courses, evaluation of instruction and a wide range of student interaction issues (communication, disagreements and grievance procedures, academic dishonesty, student conduct, cultural perspectives, sexual harassment, etc.).

Based on survey data, Educational Policies and Issues has placed primary emphasis on the key areas of student interaction and evaluation of instruction. This segment of the core has been particularly successful in adapting a series of case studies, each of which is directly linked to formal college policies and procedures. This method provides faculty members with an efficient review of key policy support areas while at the same time generating a significant amount of individual participation and information sharing. More recently, this session has begun to experiment with a simulation model related to evaluation of instruction. In this context participants are asked to complete the college's Student Assessment of Instruction form with their own student history in a particular course as a basis for the response. Following this simulation the group engages in a roundtable discussion on the relative impact of selected evaluation variables. This approach has been very useful in sensitizing faculty members to the perspectives of the student audience, clarifying the purposes of student assessment and familiarizing faculty members with the actual evaluation instrument.

The second workshop on Learning Theory reviews key concepts and research perspectives on student motivation and classroom effectiveness. This workshop is presented and facilitated by an experienced faculty member with formal graduate training in psychology. For this segment the pre workshop survey examines participant interest related to cognitive processing, neurological research and multi sensory approaches, multiple intelligence and individual differences, verbal learning principles such as serial position, trials, categorizing, classical and operant conditioning, behavior modification, reinforcement principles, motivation principles and learning strategies.

Over time two key "areas of focus" have emerged as most critical to the College

Level Teaching Core audience for the Learning Theory workshop. Included in this context are motivation and learning strategies. Presenters have employed a variety of techniques in addressing these areas including research overviews, discussions and questions-answer sessions on expository learning, discovery learning, mastery learning, peer tutoring and computer-based instruction. Motivational questions are most often examined by reviewing a series of personal attributes that may be relevant to learning strategies such as separation/individuation, learning-oriented vs. grade-oriented, intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation, self-actualization, self-esteem, needs for approval, conventionality, dependence vs. independence, internal vs. external standards of evaluation, fears of success, self-assertion, conformity, anxiety, optimism-pessimism, self-efficacy/confidence, performance and evaluation anxieties, fear of failure and defensiveness. Standard information is also provided on the definition of and the adaptation to various learning styles. One particularly well received approach was a segment of the workshop entitled "What My Students Have Taught Me About Learning." This historical listing of student perspectives on their most effective teachers offers some important insights on motivation, course design and instructional technique.

The third workshop on Testing and Instruction (Teacher Effectiveness) provides a more direct approach to instructional planning, implementation, application and evaluation. This workshop is presented and facilitated by a university professor with specialization in teaching and learning models. For this segment the pre workshop survey examines participant interest related to essay, multiple choice and true-false questions, research papers and projects, classroom organization and management, social learning, information-processing, personal reflection, behavioral systems (mastery learning, behavior modification, simulations) and learning styles.

Participant interest related to this workshop is evenly distributed among the various areas listed in the survey instrument. Thus, workshop design for Teacher Effectiveness focuses on various forms of testing and instruction as a unified process. Conceptual models of teaching and evaluation are reviewed in terms of assumptions, advantages and potential weaknesses. Particular emphasis is placed on cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. A popular feature of this workshop has been the use developmental exercises to demonstrate the purpose and utility of various teaching and testing alternatives. Also, emphasized is the importance of lesson preplanning. In this context presenters utilize a matching process (content to the learner) as part of a complete instructional effectiveness lesson design. Other useful features of this workshop include rather creative visual models on various cognitive organizers (Venn diagram, matrix, mind map, web, questions, ranking, T-chart, thinking at right angles, bridging snapshots, etc.) and the use of a Consensogram system to measure a group's perception of effort, commitment and understanding on a particular question.

The final workshop on Educational Technologies provides an extensive hands-on overview of learning resources support services and facilities. This workshop is presented and facilitated by appropriate members of the college's learning resources staff. For this segment the pre workshop survey examines participant interest related to media

adaptation to instruction, passive learning media (transparencies, projectors, videotape and film, laser videodisc technology), active learning media (computer-assisted instruction, classroom and lab activities, computer presentation devices and software, interactive videodisc technology), distance learning and teleconferencing, Internet and electronic databases and networked reference systems.

In-depth awareness on learning resources services and facilities are imperative for all members of the teaching faculty. The highest interest frequencies have been associated with media adaptations to instruction, active learning media and, predictably, the Internet. The Educational Technologies workshop has provided the college with an effective and practical means of orientation and training. Touring of the Learning Resources Centers at the college's main campuses brings College Level Teaching Core participants in direct contact with library collections, specialized research and media services, computer lab facilities and access to the community college system and state university system data bases.

Each session of the College Level Teaching Core employs contemporary information and research perspectives on a variety of topical areas including legal analysis, conflict resolution, learning, testing and computerized instruction. For all presentations, workshop objectives are clearly delineated to establish clarity of purpose, a significant volume of support material is distributed to reinforce the future value of training, and evaluation instruments are completed to ensure continuous review and improvement of the program.

The College Level Teaching Core program has been in operation for approximately four years. A standard evaluation instrument is employed to monitor the effectiveness of workshop design and presentation. Participants are asked to provide scaled responses (5-agree through 1-disagree) to questions on workshop substance, relevance to instructional roles, clarity of purpose, organization, personal involvement, usefulness and tendency to recommend to colleagues. In addition, there are open-ended questions on reasons for participation, most valuable concepts, skill or ideas learned, potential application of skills or techniques, topics of lesser value and commentary on the usefulness of handouts and reading material. Feedback has improved consistently over this time frame with most scaled responses in the 5-4 range.